

Holy Assumption Russian Orthodox Church,  
Chapel of Saint Nicholas  
Kenai  
Kenai-Cook Inlet Division  
Alaska

HABS No. AK-39-B

HABS  
AK,  
9-KEN,  
1-B.

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

*Addendum to*

Holy Assumption Russian Orthodox Church --  
Chapel of St. Nicholas  
Mission and Overland Streets  
Kenai  
Kenai Peninsula Borough  
Alaska

HABS No. AK-39-B

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AK,  
9-KEN,  
1-B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
HOLY ASSUMPTION RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
CHAPEL OF ST. NICHOLAS

HABS  
AK.  
9-KEN,  
1-B-

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Location: Near Mission Street, Kenai, Alaska.

Significance: Unusual among Alaskan Russian Orthodox chapels, the Chapel of St. Nicholas is larger and more elaborate than most shrines, with its tall pyramidal roof and cross gable, yet smaller and plainer than most chapels, with its unfinished log interior. The chapel was constructed in 1906 to mark the grave of Abbot Nicholas, Kenai's first resident priest.

Description: This small log building, 19'-10" on a side, is constructed of logs hewn to a 5"-width, laid horizontally with dovetailed notching at the corners. The logs, hewn flat on three sides, are grooved on the bottoms to fit over the ones below, and chinked with moss. The pyramidal roof with four cross gables is covered with wood shingles. The gables are filled with vertical boards. At the center, a cupola supports an onion dome and three-bar cross.

There is a set of plain double doors on the west side, which is the only access to the building. The north and south walls each have two three-light windows in plain frames. In the north, south, and east gables there are double-hung sash windows, now boarded up. The interior is unfinished. The flooring is tongue-and-groove planking. The walls are braced in the corners with 9"-diameter logs.

In 1973, the building received a new foundation of concrete blocks, and new sill logs. In the late 1980s, emergency stabilization work included the installation of four vertical half logs on each wall, held in place by bolts that pierce every horizontal log.

History: The chapel was built in 1906 over the graves of Abbot Nicholas, the first priest assigned to Kenai; his assistant and reader, Makarii Ivanov; and another monk whose name is not known. On a 1904 survey of the site, this area is marked as the "old cemetery," and was built "on the very spot of the altar of the first Kenai church," according to a church publication (ROAM 1906 cited in Smith). It is not clear, though, whether this is the site of the first church, built in 1849, which in an 1880s photograph appears to be closer to the rectory, or the site of the first chapel, erected in 1841.

The chapel, which cost \$300, was built "through the zeal of the Kenai residents," as described in that same church publication. The chapel was consecrated on December 6, 1906. It is used for memorial services, and an annual thanksgiving service on December 19, St. Nicholas Day.

Sources: Barbara Smith, "National Register Nomination: Holy Assumption Russian Orthodox Church," National Park Service, 1985.

Historian: Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, 1990.